GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1965
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2017
Promotion of Agriculture Sector
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that due priority is not given to the agriculture sector in the country, so far and if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto;

(b) whether the Government proposes to promote agriculture sector to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is a need to incorporate and promote silviculture and pisciculture along with the agriculture sector and if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government in this regard;

(d) whether the small scale industries in the agriculture sector is playing an important role in boosting local income/ economy and enhancing the prospects of the farming sector and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in the interest of the farmers in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a): No Madam. Agriculture plays a vital role in the country's economy and given the importance of agriculture sector, the Government has substantially enhanced the budget allocation for the agriculture sector from Rs. 35,983.69 crore BE (including Rs. 20,400.00 crore for Plan) during 2016-17 to Rs. 52,655.00 crore BE during 2017-18.

(b): Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare is implementing various programmes/ schemes to improve the farm productivity, reduce cost of cultivation and ensure remunerative prices on farm produce, thereby enhancing farmers' income and strengthening the rural economy, which helps to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas.
Contd..2/-

(c): Yes, Madam. During XII Plan, with effect from 2014-15 Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare has launched Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) by subsuming schemes on horticulture including, inter-alia, National Bamboo Mission (NBM) renamed as National Agro Forestry & Bamboo Mission (NABM).

Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries (DADF) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has restructured the Fisheries scheme as Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries, 2016 which encompasses following components:-

i) National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB);
ii) Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture;
iii) Development of Marine Fisheries, Infrastructure and Post-Harvest Operations;
iv) National Scheme of Welfare of Fishermen
v) Strengthening of Database & Geographical Information System of the Fisheries Sector; and
vi) Issuance of Biometric Identity Cards to Coastal Fishermen.

The Blue Revolution, with its multi-dimensional activities, focuses mainly on increasing production from aquaculture and fisheries resources, both inland and marine. Blue Revolution visualizes "Creating an enabling environment for an integrated and holistic development and management of fisheries keeping in view the sustainability, bio-security and environmental concerns".

The main objectives of the scheme are:-

i) To increase the overall fish production in a responsible and sustainable manner for economic prosperity;
ii) To modernize fisheries with special focus on new technologies;
iii) To ensure food and nutritional security;

iv) To generate employment and export earnings;
v) To ensure inclusive development and empower fishermen and aquaculture farmers.

(d): Agro produce based industries, and those engaged in manufacture of inputs of agricultural production, and farm implements as well as providing various services for farming activities have preponderance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and therefore, have a major role in boosting the farming sector, and improving the local economy.

(e): The focus of the Government is on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. Farm viability is possible, when cost of cultivation is reduced, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices on their produce. The Department has been implementing various schemes to meet this objective, viz. Soil Health Card Scheme (SHC), Neem Coated Urea, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), National Agriculture Market scheme (e-NAM), Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

In addition, the Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to Rs.3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2015-16, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. Further, the Government is implementing several Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. National Food Security Mission (NFSM); Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH); National Mission on Oilseeds & Oilpalm (NMOOP); National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA); National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).
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